

Information for Parents

Secondary Schools



**Deadline for
applications
Friday
31 October
2014**

2015-16

Introduction

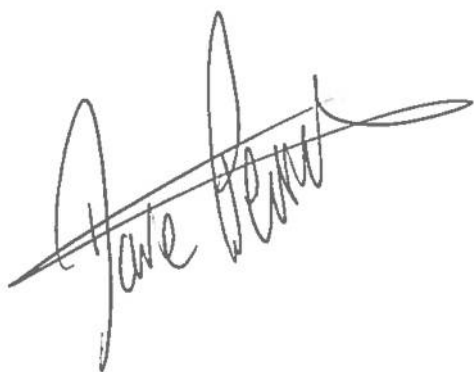
Moving to secondary school is one of the most important steps in a child's life. This guide has been produced to provide you with the information to make that decision and sets out the steps necessary to make your application.

These are exciting times for our secondary schools. As we are now well into our Building Schools for the Future rebuild and renovation programme, pupils are starting to access some of the best facilities available anywhere in the country. Our fourteen secondary schools are working together to improve standards and to provide the best opportunities for young people in Stoke-on-Trent.

Please read this guide before making your decision. I also encourage you to visit your preferred schools to ask any questions on their provision; all schools have open evenings, the details of which are included in this guide. Each school also has additional information available via its website.

Applications should be made online at stoke.gov.uk/admissions or by completing an application form by 31 October 2014. You will be informed of the outcome on 1 March 2015. This is National Offer Day. As 1 March is a Sunday, the allocation letters will be sent on Monday 2 March. If you apply on-line, an email will be sent on 1 March.

Staff in the Admissions and Transport Team can be contacted on 01782 234598 to provide assistance if you have any queries on making this application.



Dave Perrett

Assistant Director, Learning Services
People Directorate

Contents

2

Introduction

4

**Applying for a place
at Secondary School**

10

Schools information

13

Transport

15

Other information



Apply on-line for school places
stoke.gov.uk/admissions

Reminder

The deadline for applications for
a place at secondary school in
Stoke-on-Trent for 2015 is

Friday
31 October
2014

Applications received after this deadline
will be processed as soon as possible,
but parental preferences expressed by
the deadline will take priority.

**Applications
open on
Monday
8 September
2014**

**Deadline for
applications
Friday
31 October
2014**

The information contained in this booklet was accurate
at the time of publication. Parents should refer to the website
stoke.gov.uk/admissions for the latest information.



Applying for a place at secondary school

How do I apply for a school place?

You can apply for a Year 7 school place in a Stoke-on-Trent school from 8 September 2014. If your child is in Year 6 and you live in the city, you should register your preference on-line at **stoke.gov.uk/admissions**. You should have received a letter detailing a Unique Identifier (UID) to use with this application.

The benefits of applying on-line are:

- You will get an instant email confirmation that your application has been received;
- You will be notified of the outcome of your application by email on **1 March 2015**;
- You may edit your preferences on-line anytime before the closing date of **31 October 2014**.

If you are applying for a Church Aided School or Faith-Based Academy, additional information such as baptism certificate/faith reference will be required. This must be forwarded separately. Please refer to the individual admissions policies for faith schools to confirm which additional information is necessary.

Please note: The required additional information relating to applications on faith grounds must be supplied. Failure to do so will affect the admissions criteria under which your application is considered.

If you prefer to complete a paper copy of the application form, this can be downloaded from the above website or can be obtained by phoning the **Admissions and Transport Team (Tel: 01782 234598)**. If you require a receipt for your completed form, it will need to be hand delivered to your child's current school and a receipt requested.

Should you wish to change any of the details on your application, you can do so up until the closing date of 31 October 2014 by emailing the Admissions and Transport Team via: admissions@stoke.gov.uk or by writing to the address on the back page.

You should express a preference for three schools on the form. These should be listed in order of preference.

It is most important that you include all of your preferences at this stage, as some schools will have more applications than they can take. Where we are unable to meet your first preference, we will try to offer your next preferred school. Naming the same school more than once on an application form does not increase the chances of being successful. Instead, it will reduce your opportunity to secure a place at a second or third preference.

Children with Statements of Special Educational Needs

Children and Young People have Special Educational Needs (SEN), if they have a learning difficulty which requires a greater level of SEN provision than most children and young people of their age.

If your child has a Statement and is due to move from one sector of education to another, for example from primary to secondary education, an annual review meeting will be held in the summer term of the year before they are to transfer, to ensure planning and preparation are in place for a smooth transition.

The SEN Policy and Inclusion Strategy set out the policy, principles and priorities on which arrangements for SEN are based. These documents can be found on our website **stoke.gov.uk**

If your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs, it will need to be amended to name the school your child will attend. The annual review in the summer term, prior to their transfer a year later, will give you the opportunity to express a preference for the school you want your child to attend. We must agree your preference providing:

- The school is suitable for the child's age, ability and aptitude and the Special Educational Needs set out in Part 2 of the Statement;
- The child's attendance is not compatible with the efficient education of other children in the school; and
- The placement is an efficient use of the local authority's resources.

It is generally expected that, if your child has made progress in a mainstream primary school, s/he will be able to make progress in a mainstream secondary school.

The arrangements for transfer of young people with a Statement are made by the SEN Monitoring and Assessment Service. If you have any queries please ring **01782 236842**.

What types of school are available in Stoke-on-Trent?

Your child will transfer from a primary to a secondary school in the September after his/her eleventh birthday. City of Stoke-on-Trent secondary schools are comprehensive and cater for both boys and girls. This means that they accept children of all abilities and no child is offered or refused a place on the basis of general level of ability. The only exception to this is St. Joseph's College, which is a selective school.

Currently, there are three types of secondary school within the city:

Foundation Trust Schools

These are non-denominational schools where the governing body has the same power as the governing body of an Aided school. These schools are supported by a charitable trust.

- Sandon High School
- Trentham High School

Academies

These are state-funded independent schools, some of which are Voluntary Aided*.

- Birches Head Academy
- Haywood Academy
- Ormiston Horizon Academy
- Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy
- St Joseph's College
- St. Margaret Ward Catholic Academy
- St Peter's Academy
- St. Thomas More Catholic Academy
- The Co-operative Academy of Stoke-on-Trent
- The Discovery Academy
- The Excel Academy Stoke-on-Trent
- Thistley Hough Academy

Voluntary Aided Schools

*These are "Church" schools, run with the support of the Anglican or Roman Catholic Church or their Trustees. They have a legal duty to preserve and develop their denominational religious character and will strongly emphasise religious education. These schools are run in close partnership with the local authority.

Schools in Other Local Authorities

Admissions policies for other local authority schools can be found on the relevant website. For example, schools in Staffordshire can be found on their website: staffordshire.gov.uk

Parental Responsibility

An application for a school place can only be made by someone with "parental responsibility" for the child. The Children Act of 1989 requires schools to know who has "parental responsibility" for each child. This helps to ensure that everyone who has parental responsibility for a child is consulted about important decisions, even if s/he does not live with the child.

Mothers always have parental responsibility, unless removed by the court. Fathers also have parental responsibility if married to the mother (and this carries on after any divorce/separation or re-marriage even if the child lives apart from them). Fathers named on the birth certificate, whether married or not, have parental responsibility. Unmarried fathers, step-fathers and other relatives who look after a child can obtain parental responsibility by applying to the court, but do not qualify automatically.

Please help the school to collect this information. If any changes occur in your family life, or if orders are made under the Children Act which affect your child, please tell the school.

If you need help with this matter, the Education Welfare Officer attached to the school will be pleased to assist.

Deadline for applications
Friday
31 October
2014



Transferring from primary to secondary school

This section of the booklet applies to all secondary schools, including those outside of the city. If your preference is for a Church school or Faith Academy, please read carefully the admissions policies on the school's website which will inform you of any supplementary information which is required.

The Admissions Code does not give you the right to choose which school your child should be admitted to. However, the city council must make arrangements to enable you, as parents, to express a preference for the secondary school(s) which you would like your child to attend. Your preference must be met unless to do so would "prejudice the provision of efficient education or the efficient use of resources" - for example, when a particular school is full. If a school is full and it is not possible to meet all parental preferences, your second preference will be very important. It is, therefore, vital that you give careful consideration as to which schools to nominate and in which order you name them. Please note that if your child has a Statement of Special Educational Needs then we must allocate a place at the school named on the Statement.

Schools hold open evenings for parents during the first half of the Autumn Term, and this provides an opportunity for you to visit those in which you are interested. You may also consult schools' inspection reports at ofsted.gov.uk and schools' examination results at education.gov.uk

All applications for secondary schools are managed by Stoke-on-Trent City Council on behalf of Foundation, Voluntary Aided schools and Academies. This is known as the co-ordinated admission scheme.

We will pass to the governing bodies of Foundation Trust, Academies and Voluntary Aided schools the preferences for their schools and will ask the governors to list the children in priority order according to their admissions policy. These lists will be returned to us. Admissions authorities cannot take into account the position of a school on the parent's preference form.

We will pass preferences for schools in other local authority areas to the Admissions and Transport Team for that area and ask that team to which children it will be able to allocate places in its schools.

Once all the lists have been completed, we will allocate places up to each school's admission number.

If a child is eligible for a place at more than one school the child will be offered a place at the school which is highest on the parent's preference list. In the event that a child is not eligible for any of the schools that their parent has named, they will be offered a place at the nearest school where there is a place. Each child will be offered one place.

The advantage of this coordinated system is that a child is more likely to gain a place at one of the schools which is a preference even if it is not a first preference. It must be recognised that this could be at the expense of a child who lives further away and whose parents put the school as a first preference.

What do I need to do?

You will need to make an application, either on line or by obtaining a paper copy of the form. Failure to complete an application form could jeopardise a place at your preferred school.

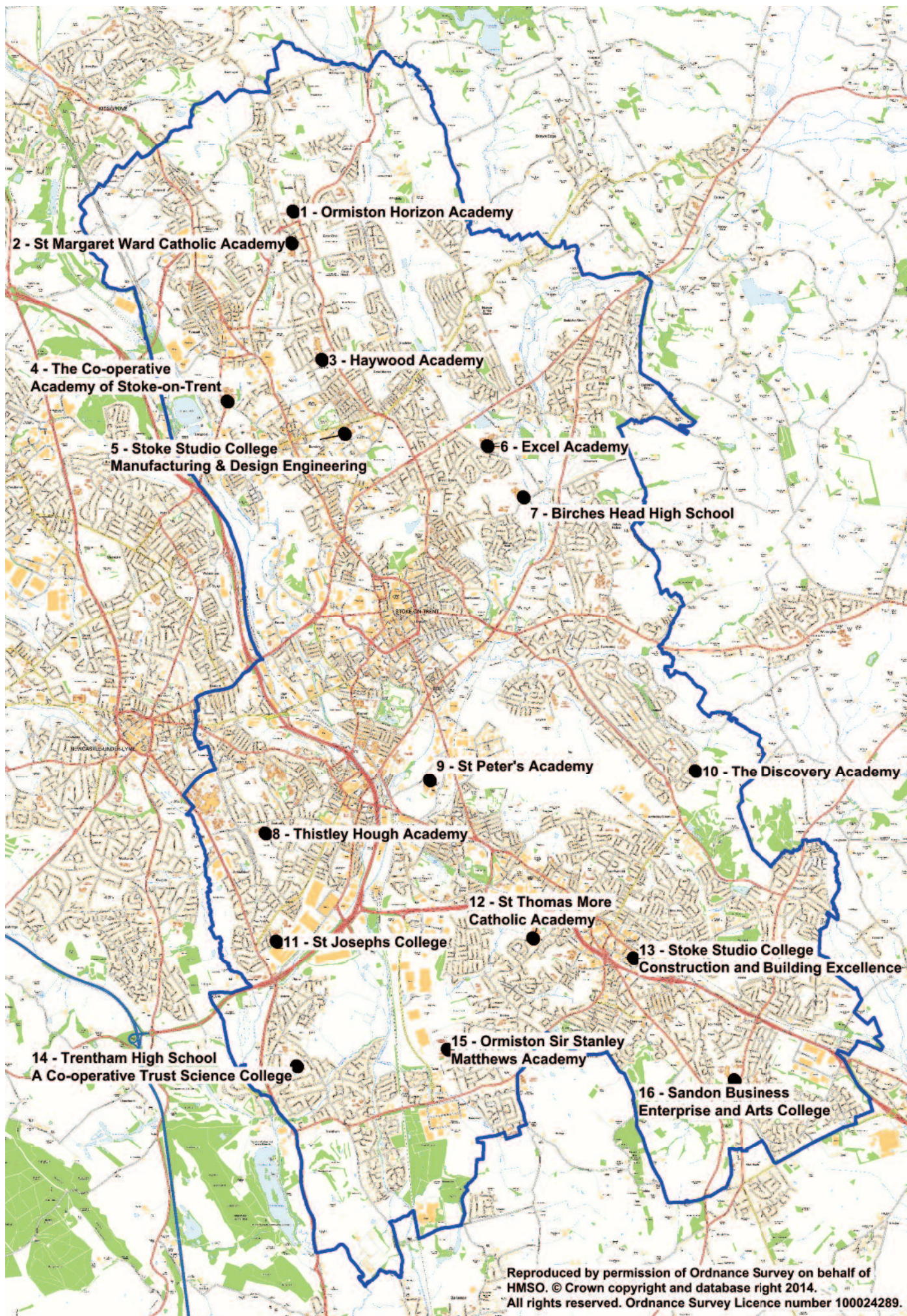
How to decide which schools to apply for

Information about how places were allocated last year is available on pages 8 and 9. Look at that information and think about:

- What is the admission number of the school(s) you are interested in? (This is the number of children the school takes each year.)
- how many applications were received for your preferred school(s) last year?
- how many children were on the waiting list for your preferred school(s)?
- are they likely to be full?
- how far away do you live from the school(s)?

The answers to these questions will give you an idea of how likely you are to get a place at the school(s). It is important to remember that the pattern of applications may differ from year to year. You can express three preferences and we would encourage you to do so. If you have a low priority (within the published oversubscription criteria for a school), you may not get a place at your preferred school.

**Applications
open on
Monday
8 September
2014**



Academies, Church and Foundation schools may have their own admissions criteria and the governing body of each school will decide on admissions. If you wish to apply for any of these schools, you must include them in your preferences and complete the relevant sections of the form. Details of how these schools will give priority to pupils seeking admission can be found on each schools website. If the governors at one of these schools are unable to offer your child a place, you are still entitled to an appeal. See page 10

For applications to schools in other Local Authority areas, you should name the school as one of your preferences on the Stoke-on-Trent application and submit this as set out on page 4. We will then send information on the application to the other local authority or school for their attention. There is no need to fill in a second application, but you are strongly advised to name three preferences.

If, having looked at the information on pages 8 and 9, you are unsure of your chances of gaining a place at any school, please telephone the helpline (details on page 4), or the school, for advice before completing your application.

Do second and third preferences matter?

You should name three schools on the form. It is most important that you include all of the preferences at this stage, as some schools may have more applications than they can take. In that situation, where we are unable to meet your first preference, we will try to offer your next preferred school. If you have a child in a school, you cannot assume that you will be allocated a place at that school.

Naming three preferences will not affect your chances of securing a place at your first preference school. On the other hand, naming the same school more than once on the application form cannot increase the chances of you being successful. Instead, it could reduce your opportunity to secure a place at your second or third school within a reasonable distance from your home address.

Local Authority Offers

If it is not possible to offer any of your preferences, by law we must make an offer of the nearest school that has a place. This is not done until after we have considered all the preferences. We make a Local Authority offer to ensure that no Stoke-on-Trent child, for whom an application has been received, is without a school place for September. Parents / Carers can accept or decline this offer and have a legal Right of

Secondary School	Pupil Admission Number (PAN)	1st Prefs	2nd Prefs
Birches Head Academy	210	124	69
Excel Academy	220	143	114
Haywood Academy	210	201	156
Ormiston Horizon Academy	210	175	82
Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy	210	238	71
Sandon Business, Enterprise & Arts College	180	146	51
St Joseph's College	150	252	59
St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy	200	208	104
St Peter's Academy	240	245	198
St Thomas More Catholic Academy	187	138	113
The Co-operative Academy of Stoke-on-Trent	210	133	60
The Discovery Academy	240	225	91
Thistley Hough Academy	210	104	52
Trentham High School	162	93	87

Appeal (ROA) in respect of any of their unsuccessful preferences. A school place can only be refused in writing. This should only be done once an alternative school place has been secured.

We also operate a waiting list process and your child's name will automatically be added to the waiting list of any Stoke-on-Trent school of a higher preference than the one offered. The waiting lists are maintained in the order of the Admissions Policy relating to that school. Your child's position on any waiting list can go up and down, as it can be affected by other families and their changing circumstances. For example:

- if a family with a higher priority moves away and withdraws their application for a school place, your child will move up the list;
- if a child moves into the area, closer to the school you would like, your child will move down the list.

Where families decline allocated places, those places will be allocated to pupils on the waiting list, in priority order. Each year a number of places become available and are offered to families on the waiting list. This process continues for as long as changes are requested by families within the city.

**Applications
open on
Monday
8 September
2014**

**Deadline for
applications
Friday
31 October
2014**



3rd Prefs	Total Applications	Allocated	Waiting	
70	263	136	n/a	Birches Head Academy
33	290	160	n/a	Excel Academy
97	454	208	n/a	Haywood Academy
40	297	172	n/a	Ormiston Horizon Academy
40	349	212	32	Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy
42	239	155	n/a	Sandon Business, Enterprise & Arts College
28	339	152	99	St Joseph's College
62	374	205	11	St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy
117	560	240	25	St Peter's Academy
92	343	175	n/a	St Thomas More Catholic Academy
55	248	141	n/a	The Co-operative Academy of Stoke-on-Trent
41	357	232	n/a	The Discovery Academy
26	182	124	n/a	Thistley Hough Academy
64	244	116	n/a	Trentham High School

Data relating to applications received by and offers made on 1 March 2014.

Admissions Policies

What will the Local Authority do?

For applications to schools that use the Local Authority (LA) admissions policy we will draw up a list of all the children whose parents have named the school as a preference. At this stage, we will not take any account of whether it is a first, second or third preference. We will use the following criteria to draw up the list. We will list the children in descending order of priority.

1. Children who are in the care of a local authority (looked-after children) or provided with accommodation by them (Section 22 of the Children Act 1989) and children who were previously looked after but ceased to be so because they were adopted (or became subject to a residence order or special guardianship order);
2. Children who have older brothers or sisters at the school at the time that they will start; and
3. Children who live nearest to the school as determined by a straight line measurement from the front door of the child's home address to the main entrance of the school.

We will also consider any reasons put forward by parents in support of their preference. These reasons must be supported with evidence wherever possible. If the reasons concern the child's health or social wellbeing, the evidence must be provided by a medical practitioner or other social care professional. If we consider that the reasons for a place at a particular school are sufficiently strong, we will place the child on the school list above those whose position is based upon the distance criterion. If the last eligible child is a twin, triplet or child of any other multiple birth, we will allocate places to the siblings even if that means exceeding the admission number.

The local authority no longer uses catchment areas for the allocation of secondary school places.

All applicants are considered against these criteria, with no priority given for early application. Late applications will receive individual consideration. Normally we will accept applications received late for genuine reasons, for example, a single parent who has been ill or a family that has recently returned from abroad.

For some schools, not all preferences can be accommodated. In a few cases, it may not be possible to meet any of your three preferences because all places are filled by candidates with a higher priority. In that case a place will be offered at the school which is nearest to your home address with a place available.

Waiting lists for all schools have to be held until the end of the Autumn Term (i.e. 31 December 2015). If places do

become available, due to pupil movements in the area, the places will be filled in line with the admissions criteria.

What do I do if I don't get the school that is my preference

You should firstly call the Admissions Team on **01782 234598** to talk about the options available.

There may be a place available at your catchment school, or possibly a place at another school that you had not thought about before. If applicable, we will explain how you can change your preferences.

Additional information and advice is available from ACE (Advisory Centre for Education) on the free phone number **020 8888 3377**.

Fraudulent Applications

If a place is offered on the basis of a fraudulent or intentionally misleading application from a parent, this may effectively deny a place to a child with a stronger claim. In that situation, the offer of a place will be withdrawn. For example, places can be withdrawn if the address used on the application form is not the address where the child lives.

Where an offer is withdrawn on the basis of misleading information, the application must be considered again, and Right of Appeal can be offered.

Right of Appeal

You can appeal against the decision to an Independent Appeals Panel. The Appeals Panel normally consists of three people, none of whom work for the city council or the school and will not have dealt with your case before. The Panel's decision is final. Normally, parents are allowed one appeal per school. You are however, entitled to appeal for as many schools as you wish and, if we are unable to offer you a place, you have the right to an appeal for each school. Repeat appeals for the same school are only considered where there had been a material change in the circumstances of the child or family since the previous appeal, for example, a change of home address. For some schools you should lodge your appeal through the local authority. For others, you should go direct to the school. The Admissions and Transport Team will be happy to direct you. Their phone number is on the back page. You can also ask to go on a school's waiting list.

Whichever school your child transfers to, the aim is to provide a happy and challenging education, with the emphasis on hard work and achievement.

Birches Head Academy**bircheshead.org.uk**

Birches Head Road, Birches Head, ST2 8DD Phone: 01782 233595 Email: info@bircheshead.org.uk
 Headteacher: Ms Karen Healey

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	Open Evening 2014
Convertor Academy	7	210	757	Wednesday 17 September 6.30 - 8.30pm

Haywood Academy**haywood.stoke.sch.uk**

High Lane, Burslem, ST6 7AB Phone: 01782 853535
 Headteacher: Mr Carl Ward info@haywoodacademy.coop

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	Open Evening 2014
Converter Academy	3	210	1049	Thursday 18 September 7pm Tours: 8.45-9.40am, 11.30-12.15pm, 2.10-2.50pm

Ormiston Horizon Academy**ormistonhorizonacademy.co.uk**

Turnhurst Road, Tunstall, ST6 6JZ Phone: 01782 883333 Email: info@ormistonhorizonacademy.co.uk
 Principal: Mr Rod Hughes

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	Open Evening 2014
Academy	1	210	542	Thursday 25 September 6pm and 7.15pm Open Mornings: Wed 24, Thurs 25, Fri 26, Sat 27 September 9.30am - 11.00

Ormiston Sir Stanley Matthews Academy**ossma.co.uk**

Beaconsfield Drive, Blurton, ST3 3JD Phone: 01782 882200 Email: info@ossma.co.uk
 Principal: Mr Mark Stanyer

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	Open Evening 2014
Academy	15	210	718	Wednesday 24 September 6.30pm

Sandon Business, Enterprise & Arts College**sandonbec.com**

Sandon Road, Meir, ST3 7DF Phone: 01782 377100 Email: info@sandonmail.com
 Headteacher: Ms Karen Castrey

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	Open Evening 2014
Foundation Trust	16	180	850	Wednesday 24 September 7pm, Session 1 - 5pm-6.30pm, Session 2 - 6.30-8pm

St Joseph's College**stjosephstrentvale.com**

London Road, Trent Vale, ST4 5NT Phone: 01782 848008 Email: sjcollege@stjosephsmail.com
 Headteacher: Ms Roisin Maguire

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	Open Evening 2014
Converter Academy	11	150	1070 (with 6th form)	Wednesday 10 September 7pm

St Margaret Ward Catholic Academy**stmargaretward.co.uk**

Little Chell Lane, Tunstall, ST6 6LZ Phone: 01782 821559 Email: smwadmin@sgfl.org.uk
 Headteacher: Mr Chris Smith

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	Open Evening 2013
Voluntary Aided	2	200	1159 (with 6th form)	Wednesday 24 September 7pm Open Mornings: Thursday 25 September and Tuesday 30 September. Tours will commence at 9.15am and 11.15am, please contact the academy prior to the day should you wish to attend an open morning.

St Peter's Academy**spa.woodard.co.uk**

Fenton Manor, Fenton, ST4 2RR Phone: 01782 882500 Email: office@spa.woodard.co.uk
 Principal: Mr Joe Burns

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	Open Evening 2014
Academy	9	240	1088	Thursday 25 September 1.30-3pm Saturday 4 October 10am-12 noon

St Thomas More Catholic Academystmca.org.uk

Longton Hall Road, Longton, ST3 2NJ Phone: 01782 882900 Email: office@stmcc.net
 Acting Principal: Mr Mark Ranier

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	Open Evening 2014 / Tour
Academy	12	187	1068	Thursday 25 September 7pm Coffee Morning / Tour: Thursday 9 October and Thursday 16 October 9.30am

The Co-operative Academy of Stoke-on-Trentcas.coop

Westport Road, Tunstall, ST6 4LD Phone: 01782 882300 Email: enquiries@cas.coop
 Principal: Mr Nick Lowry

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	Open Evening 2014
Academy	4	210	680	Thursday 18 September 3.30pm - 7.30pm

The Discovery Academythediscoveryacademy.co.uk

Discovery Drive, Stoke-on-Trent, ST2 0GA Phone: 01782 882100 Email: academy@thediscoveryacademy.co.uk
 Executive Principal: Mr John Patino

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	Open Evening 2014
Academy	10	240	1338	Tuesday 23 September 5pm - 8pm

The Excel Academy Stoke-on-Trent* (Sept)excelacademy.info

Milton Road, Sneyd Green, ST1 6LG Phone: 01782 882700 Email: enquiries@excelacademy.info
 Executive Principal: Mr John Patino

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	Open Evening 2014
Academy	6	210	849	Thursday 25 September 5pm - 8pm

Thistley Hough Academythistleyhough.org.uk

Thistley Hough, Penkhull, ST4 5JJ Phone: 01782 883500 Email: office@thistleyhough.org.uk
 Principal: Mrs Holly Hartley

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	Open Evening 2014
Academy	8	210	810	Wednesday 24 and Thursday 25 September 6pm, Morning sessions: Thursday 19 and Friday 20 September 9am. Tours available during the school day, please contact reception for details

Trentham High School - A Co-operative Trust Science Collegetrentham.stoke.sch.uk

Allerton Road, Trentham, ST4 8PQ Phone: 01782 883200 Email: trentham@sgfl.org.uk
 Headteacher: Dr Rowena Blencowe

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	Open Evening 2014
Foundation Trust	14	150	731	Thursday 9 October Taster Session: 6pm, Open Evening: 7pm

The Studio College for Construction & Building Excellencestokestudiocollege.co.uk

Chelson Street, Longton, ST3 1PT Phone: 01782 603777 Email: adminsUPPORT@stokestudiocollege.co.uk

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	
Studio College	13	50	55 (with 6th form)	

The Studio College for Manufacturing & Design Engineeringstokestudiocollege.co.uk

Moorland Road, Burslem, ST6 1JJ Phone: 01782 603171 Email: adminsUPPORT@stokestudiocollege.co.uk

Type of school	Map Ref	PAN	NOR Summer 2014	
Studio College	5	35	42	

* Formerly Holden Lane High School

Transport



It is the responsibility of parents to ensure that their child(ren) get to and from school at the appropriate time each day.

When deciding on which school you want to send your child to, you may wish to think about the journey to school. For example, how far it is, is it safe, is it a pleasant journey, and how much it will cost.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council will provide assistance with a pupil's school transport arrangements if they meet the criteria under our Home to School Transport Policy.

Home to School Transport Policy

Pupils seeking free transport must be of compulsory school age i.e. between the ages of 11 and 17 years and living in the City of Stoke-on-Trent.

Free transport may be offered to the following categories of young people:

- Pupils unable to walk to school by reason of a temporary mobility/medical problem (transport offered on a temporary basis);
- Pupils unable to walk to school by reason of a long-term medical problem (where the application is accompanied by a letter from a doctor or other medical professional to confirm the medical circumstances and how these affect the child's ability to get to school);
- Pupils unable to walk to school because of the unsuitability of the only reasonable route;
- Those pupils aged 11 to 17 years (applicable from the academic year in which the child turns 11) who live more than 3 miles from their nearest qualifying school;
- Those pupils aged 11 to 17 years from low income families * who live more than 2 but less than 6 miles from their school which must be one of the three nearest, qualifying schools to their home. Eligibility will be reviewed annually;
- Those pupils aged 11 to 17 years from low income families * whose parents have expressed a preference for a faith school based on their religious beliefs where that school is the nearest appropriate faith school and is more than 2 miles but less than 15 miles from their home.

Transport Charges - Faith schools

Parents of pupils aged 11 to 17 years are responsible for the cost of travel to and from Faith schools unless they are on *low income. For further information see the Stoke-on-Trent transport policy on our website: stoke.gov.uk/admissions

Qualifying Schools

Parents may state preferences for any schools as part of the admissions process. Some preferences may appear to trigger free transport if a place were to be allocated. However, if they fall outside the "qualifying school" criteria and there are suitable places at a nearer qualifying school, then the pupil does not qualify for transport assistance. Transport to and from school then becomes the responsibility of the parent.

Qualifying schools must satisfy all of the following criteria:

- They must be a Community, Foundation, Academy or Voluntary Controlled/Aided school or a pupil referral unit;
- It must be the nearest school to the pupil's home that provides education appropriate to the age, ability and aptitude of the child (including any special placement for an excluded pupil who is off the roll of their mainstream school, or a Faith school that has been chosen by parents because of a religious belief), with places available;
- However, for pupils aged 11 to 17 years from low income families* a qualifying school maybe one of the three nearest schools to the pupil's home more than two miles away but less than 6 miles away; or, the nearest appropriate Faith school to the home where parents have expressed a preference based on their religious beliefs and where that school is more than 2 but less than 15 miles from their home. The distance is calculated by determining the shortest walking route (not necessarily by road);
- Where qualification is based on grounds of faith, this is determined through the assertion of this preference through the admission application process. Parents will need to have satisfied the admitting body's faith criterion. For Voluntary Controlled schools, the local authority will require evidence of the family's adherence to the religion / denomination of the school at the time of admission;
- Where a pupil attends a split site school, the relevant site for qualification purposes will be the site where the pupil spends the majority of his/her school week as notified by the school at the beginning of the academic year;

- Where a pupil is dual registered, both sites will be separately assessed to determine the transport need;
- For children in the care of the local authority, the school where the child is placed is deemed to be the 'nearest qualifying school' in order to provide the necessary continuity of education. The allocation of school is to be reviewed as part of the child's regular Care Plan monitoring.

Similarly, transport will be considered to provide continuity of education where it is necessary as a result of other intervention by Vulnerable Children and Corporate Parenting.

For pupils not eligible for assistance with school transport, information regarding:

- Walking;
- Cycling;
- Bus timetables and routes for individual schools can be obtained from Traveline on **0871 200 2233** or via **www.traveline.info**

*** Low income refers to a family where the child(ren) receive free school meals or the parent(s) are in receipt of maximum working tax credit.**

Transport for Children with Special Needs

Children who have a Statement of Special Educational Needs and who attend the most appropriate school for their needs, may be provided with assistance with their transport requirements.

For further details please contact the Special Needs Team on **01782 236842**.

Sustainable Travel to School

For many children, walking and cycling are excellent ways to travel to school as it helps to keep them fit and healthy and it has the added bonus of being good for the environment. It is also a lot less stressful, for parents, than driving a car in today's busy traffic conditions. It also avoids parking difficulties and congestion which can be unpleasant, potentially hazardous for all concerned. We would like you to consider other ways of travel such as "Park & Stride" or "Free Your Feet". What's more you don't necessarily have to walk or cycle the same route as you would drive to school.

99% of Stoke-on-Trent schools have written a School Travel Plan for their site which aims to improve the way children travel to school. As part of the plans schools have developed improved facilities to help children and adults walk or cycle to school. New footpaths have been provided, road crossings and sheltered waiting constructed and lockers provided for children to keep their bags safe.

Stoke-on-Trent City Council has invested heavily in schools to encourage a new generation of cyclists. A quarter of schools are now "Bike It" schools which means that they get extra attention with cycle rides, bike related activities and cycle training. Cycle parking has now been provided at over half of Stoke-on-Trent schools and there is now a good network of safe and secure cycle routes. For more information about cycling training contact the Safe & Sustainable Transport Team on **01782 232066**.

The Sustainable Travel to School Strategy can be found on the city council's website:

stoke.gov.uk/traveltoschoolstrategy
or via **www.traveline.info**

Alternatively ring the Traveline on **0871 200 2233** or the School Travel Plan Officer on **01782 234968**.

**Deadline for
applications
Friday
31 October
2014**

**Applications
open on
Monday
8 September
2014**

**Deadline for
applications
Friday
31 October
2014**

Transferring from one secondary school to another

The legislation in relation to the In Year Admission Process changed in September 2013. Since then, parents contact schools directly for places.

If you are moving into Stoke-on-Trent or from one city to another, and wish your child to change school, you should first discuss the matter with your child's present school.

If your child is experiencing difficulties at their current school and you consider that a transfer to an alternative school may be helpful, you should still discuss your child's situation with your current school before making a final decision. You should also think about how your child will get to an alternative school, which may be some distance away from your home.

You should also note that some pupils begin their GCSE courses in Year 9 and it will almost certainly be harmful to your child's education to change school once this important stage is reached.

If after discussion and careful consideration it is considered that a transfer may be beneficial to your child, you will need to complete an In-Year Transfer Request Form. This will be provided by the school that you wish your child to attend. Please be aware that some schools request supplementary information such as Baptismal Certificates.

Once you have completed the In-Year Transfer Request Form, you must return it directly to the school. The school will then decide whether they can offer you a place and will notify you of the outcome. Should a place not be available for your child(ren), you may then approach another school. In this instance, the Local Authority will send you a letter confirming the refusal and in it will outline your right of Appeal.

Stoke-on-Trent does not provide funding for pupils to be educated at private day or boarding schools (except where such access is deemed to be necessary for children with Special Educational Needs). Similarly, Stoke-on-Trent Local Authority does not run any schools that offers boarding facilities and does not provide funding for pupils to attend boarding schools in other areas.

Post 16 Education

If you are interested in post-16 education or training, please contact the careers service:

by e-mail at careers.advice@stoke.gov.uk

by telephone **01782 237747**

or follow the links to:

www.ucasprogress.com/search

www.stoke.gov.uk/careersservice

To find out more information on post-16 educational establishments, please click here

www.stoke.gov.uk/ccm/navigation/education/colleges-and-universities/



Other Information

Fair Access Policy

The local authority is required to have an In-Year Fair Access Protocol in order to ensure that access to education is secured quickly for children who have no school place and that all schools in the city admit their fair share of children with challenging behaviour. Once a child is identified as “difficult to place”, the Admissions and Family Services Team will ask for a copy of his/her school record and any information relevant to the child’s placement.

In coming to a decision about the child’s placement the local authority will take careful account of the views of the Headteachers and governing bodies of the schools named by the parent. In particular the local authority will take account of any genuine concerns about a Fair Access admission e.g. a previous serious breakdown in relationships between the family and the school, etc.

Children without a school place must take precedence over children on a waiting list attending another school.



Family Information Service Hub

The Stoke-on-Trent Family Information Service Hub is a free local service providing a wide range and variety of information and support to parents and carers of children and young people aged 0-19 (0-25 with a disability). Information, advice and guidance is available to help you with the following:

- Behavioural issues – practical information and advice on how to tackle behavioural issues which may be affecting you and your family;
- Signposting – to local, regional and national services which can provide specialist support and advice.
- Rights and entitlements – your legal and paternal rights as a parent;
- Activities – information about activities taking place across the city during school holidays.
- Choosing childcare – types of childcare and availability of childminders; out of school clubs and holiday schemes;
- Family benefits – information on schemes to help with the cost of childcare, including tax credits;
- Brokerage – free to access additional support if you are struggling to find childcare that meets the needs of you and your family.

The FISH directory is an easy to use on-line directory of local services and childcare across the city.

The website also includes information on national sources of support. You can access the directory online at **stoke.gov.uk/fishdirectory**

To find out more about the Family Information Service Hub please contact us on:

- Telephone - **01782 232200**
- Email - **fish@stoke.gov.uk**
- Website - **stoke.gov.uk/fish**
- Twitter (@stokeFISH) and Facebook – (search for Stoke Family Information Service Hub)
- By calling in to the Civic Centre (Floor 2) or your local Children’s Centre

The Family Information Service helpline is available from 8.45am – 5pm Monday to Thursday and 8.45am - 4.30pm on a Friday. An answer phone service is available at all other times.

The Parent Partnership Service

The Stoke-on-Trent Parent Partnership Service aims to ensure that parents/carers of children with special educational needs (SEN), including the very young, have access to accurate information, advice and guidance in relation to the additional educational needs of their children so that they can make informed decisions.

We can help by:

- Ensuring parents/carers’ views and concerns about their child or young person’s Special Educational Needs are listened to;
- Supporting parents in expressing their views;
- Helping to prepare for meetings;
- Helping to write letters/reports and fill in forms;
- Offering access to the Parent Partnership Steering Group and the Parent Partnership Engagement Group (PEG).

We offer:

- A confidential telephone advice line/email advice;
- Impartial information, advice and support;
- Guidance through the SEN processes and procedures;
- Impartial advice on exclusions of children / young people with SEN and support at Independent Review Panels;
- Access to an Independent Parental Supporter;
- Help with resolving disputes;
- Access to an Independent Mediation Service;
- A range of training opportunities;
- A termly newsletter;
- Access to choice advice;

- Links with other service providers;
- A tailored information package to address an individual request;
- Support at meetings;
- Preparation for exclusion appeals and SEND Tribunal;
- Preparation and support at Independent Mediation;
- Advice and support when children / young people are out of school;
- Home visits (in exceptional cases);
- Access to a website.

Contact: The Parent Partnership Service on:
01782 234701.

Free School Meals

If you are in receipt of one of the following, your child is eligible to receive Free School Meals:

- Income Support;
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit;
- Income-Based Job-seekers Allowance;
- Child Tax Credit (providing you do not also receive Working Tax Credit) and have an annual income of £16,190 or less (as Assessed by HM Revenue and Customs);
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- Income related Employment Support Allowance.

You can make a claim at your child's school, local centre, Stoke-on-Call or you can simply ring our Free School Meals Team on **01782 236813** for assistance.

NB If you need to add a child to an existing claim you are required to complete a new application form.

Education Welfare Team

The Education Welfare Team can be contacted on **01782 235355**. Any concerns will be addressed via the telephone helpline between 8.30am and 5pm. The Education Welfare Service can offer support on a variety of issues, for instance:

- Issues surrounding school attendance;
- Bullying;
- Procedures relating to child protection;
- Child employment and performances in entertainment.

Complaints

Although our schools will try to offer your child the best possible education, you may at some point feel you wish to make a complaint.

If you are concerned about any aspect of your child's education, you should talk to the school. Most problems can be sorted out informally. If you are still unhappy, you can write to the Chair of Governors at your child's school. If you are still concerned you can contact OfSTED or, in the case of an Academy, the Academies Unit at the Department for Education (DfE). Each Faith school has its own complaints policy, a copy of which is available from the school.

Further Help and Information

The Admissions and Transport Team is the central contact point for parents requiring further help or information. Our helpline telephone numbers are **01782 234598**.

The team may also be contacted by writing to:
The Admissions and Transport Team,
People Directorate
Civic Centre, Glebe Street,
Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 1HH.

Or you could contact us by e-mail on
admissions@stoke.gov.uk

Officers will also be pleased to deal with any enquiries in person, should you prefer to visit the office at the Civic Centre to discuss your concerns. Contact the Admissions and Transport Team to make an appointment on **01782 234598**. The offices are open to the public from 8.45am to 5pm Monday to Thursday and 4.30pm on Friday. From here you can obtain information on:

- Admissions to schools;
- Exclusions;
- Free school meals;
- Bus passes.

**Deadline for
applications
Friday
31 October
2014**



Useful contact details

Admissions and Transport, People Directorate

Civic Centre, Glebe Street,
Stoke-on-Trent,
ST4 1HH

Admissions and Transport Helpline	01782 234598
In Year Admissions	01782 237856
Education Welfare	01782 235355
Parent Partnership	01782 234701
Free School Meals	01782 236813
Vulnerable Children and Corporate Parenting	01782 235100
Pupil Support for Staffordshire	01785 278593



facebook.com/stokeontrent.citycouncil



twitter.com/sotcitycouncil

People Directorate

Civic Centre, Glebe Street, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 1HH

stoke.gov.uk/education

**Deadline for
applications
Friday
31 October
2014**